



# THE FLYLEAF

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## THE FLYLEAF

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### BUILDING LIBRARY HOLDINGS IN A NEW FIELD

The accumulation of publications in a university library in any established scholarly discipline not previously included in library holdings is generally a long process that presents many problems. At this time, when Rice University is expanding its curricula to include fields formerly unrepresented at the university, these problems are being encountered in manifold form. I can speak with full knowledge only of my own field, anthropology, but I have little doubt that the circumstances we have encountered in anthropology are essentially identical with those faced by other disciplines new at the university.

An investigation of the holdings in anthropology in September, 1960, revealed that important standard works in cultural anthropology published by the large commercial firms after World War II were fairly well represented. Holdings of earlier separate works by large publishers and of important but less well advertised publications of the university presses were spotty and small. Holdings of journals and serials were small and limited almost entirely to works in the English language. Especially because much research in anthropology concerns foreign cultures, publications in foreign languages are of great importance.

But the story does not end with these deficiencies. In addition to cultural anthropology, the field of anthropology includes two other major divisions, archeology and physical anthropology. Perhaps because these two sub-fields are of less general interest than cultural anthropology to an academic community in which they are not taught, they were found to be very poorly represented in library holdings. Works in archeology consisted of a small number of separate books, principally in classical archeology, and a few journals and serials, some of them incomplete. Virtually no publications in physical anthropology were held.

The state of library holdings in anthropology as of September, 1960, might then be described as poor. Although purchasing on a small scale began in September, 1960, holdings as of January, 1961, were inadequate for effective research, and I have found it necessary to make plans to spend the summers of 1961 and 1962 at universities with larger collections. Many additions need to be made before the collection in anthropology can be described even as fair.

The problem we are now encountering in building up library holdings in anthropology at Rice consist in fact of two closely related but distinguishable aspects, neither of which is new to the academic world. The first is financial. To increase the number of anthropological works in Fondren Library so that they are adequate for instruction and for use in research by staff members would require the expenditure within the next several years of many thousands of dollars. An estimate of \$30,000 for out-of-print publications alone seem conservative, and an additional annual amount of several thousand dollars must be

available to cover the rapidly growing number of current publications, especially of journals and serials. This sum must, of course, be greatly augmented to meet the costs to the library of ordering, cataloging, and housing the acquisitions. No one familiar with the expenses of purchasing and caring for library books would find the sum of \$100,000 an unreasonable expenditure for the next five years. To the uninitiated, the amount undoubtedly seems high because necessary expenditures beyond the purchase price of the books swell the total so greatly.

Given funds, the second aspect of the problem is to buy books and get them onto the library shelves. Simple mechanical procedures of ordering, cataloging, and shelving, one might think, but they involve many time-consuming steps and special procedures. The first task is to locate the books. Out-of-print publications forming a rounded collection can rarely be purchased quickly. Private libraries are occasionally offered for sale, but the price of a good collection is high and a department hampered by limited funds is in no position to purchase it. The alternative is laborious searching through catalogs of used book dealers, and laborious checking against present holdings and as yet uncataloged acquisitions to avoid duplication. Speed is essential here. Many libraries are presently amplifying their holdings of out-of-print books, and the competition is keen. What may seem the maximum speed in ordering used books often enough results in nothing; the books have already been sold, presumably to libraries that are better staffed so that they can order more quickly.

The selection of books must come from the department concerned, and it must be done by

someone highly trained in the field. For lack of trained assistants or of funds with which to pay trained assistants for this kind of work, teaching staff members must usually comb the used book catalogs. As might be expected, catalogs of desirable works often arrive at the most undesirable times.

After selections have been made and checked against library holdings, order forms are prepared and passed on to the library staff for rechecking and many additional procedures before the order is submitted to the dealer.

For a department with limited funds, the selection of books is beset with dilemmas of choice. Should one seize the rare opportunity to buy a long-sought series that is complete or nearly so, exhausting his funds in this one grand purchase? Or should he save the money for desirable and individually less costly separate works that might come along? Should he select the rarely offered serial publication that lacks so many of its numbers? Will it ever be available again if he does not do so? If he buys, and the missing numbers are found later, will it be necessary to purchase duplicates of the numbers already received because the sets, however imperfect, will not be broken by the dealer? When hardcover editions are not available, should he buy paperback reprints, knowing that they wear out quickly and are ultimately more expensive to a library than books with hard covers as well as being more difficult to read. If an opportunity to buy something fine but expensive occurs early in the year, should he take it and hope that next year's budget will allow funds adequate to cover new publications of the balance of the year as well new publications of the year for which the funds

were intended? When catalogs from European dealers arrive, should he even bother to examine them? They often contain most desirable books, but experience has taught that even with the greatest cooperation of the library staff, already pressed in like manner by other departments, hours and even days of effort by himself and many other people may be wasted because the books have already been sold by the time the order reaches the dealer.

A department of instruction and research at a university does not properly concern itself with raising funds for book purchases. It states its needs and makes use of funds allotted. Problems encountered from day to day, then, are those of finding books, making choices when funds are limited, and finding time to go through the mechanics of ordering. Problems of a similar sort encountered by the library staff are doubtless vastly greater. Yet most of these concerns, for both department of instruction and library staff, can be made much simpler if the vital question of adequate financial support is solved.

Edward Norbeck

The Kosciuszko Foundation Dictionary, English-Polish, Polish-English. Vol. I, English-Polish. By Kazimierz Bulas and Francis J. Whitfield. The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1959. xii-1037 pp.

Ever since General Thaddeus Kosciuszko fought beside Americans in our Revolution, the American and the Polish peoples have maintained a friendship warm and unbroken. But though this spiritual understanding has existed, the language barrier between Pole and American has been formidable. The thronging consonants of Polish words, and the elusive connotations of English words have often been discouraging. Indeed, in all the history of Polish-American friendship, no really adequate English-Polish, Polish-English dictionary has appeared until now. (The nearest thing to an adequate work of this kind was published in 1851, and is of course quite out of date in 1961.)

Dr. Kazimierz Bulas, of Rice's Fondren Library, has just completed (with the assistance of Professor F. J. Whitfield of the University of California) a monumental dictionary that at last fills the long need for a bridge of words between the two peoples. The English-Polish volume of this major contribution to scholarship and to practical international understanding was issued in Holland in 1959, and in America in 1960; and the Polish-English volume is scheduled for appearance this year. Available copies of the first volume are being bought up so quickly that arrangements are already completed for massive reprint editions in Poland; and critical appreciation has been lavish. Comments like

"magnificently comprehensive and scholarly," "I cannot speak of it except in superlatives," "it is hard to see how it could be improved," "beyond comparison," "priceless," "amazingly catholic scope," "a triumph" appear everywhere the dictionary has been reviewed.

Besides being the first really major work in its field, it is peculiarly distinguished in other ways. Recognizing the modern supremacy of America in the English-speaking world, the dictionary not only includes Americanisms that would be excluded from a strictly British Dictionary, but also leans toward American spellings, pronunciations, and definitions. For example, it prefers color, not colour; center, not centre; jail, not gaol; and so on. This does not mean that the British forms are excluded; they are there, but they are marked British, and they do not dominate. Furthermore, this dictionary includes far more American words and phrases than any other foreign-language dictionary yet published. Opened at random, it reveals on a single spread these Americanisms: guff, gulch, gumbo, to gumshoe, to give it the gun. Some of these are slang or colloquialisms; and in this area also the dictionary is pre-eminent. Opened at random again, it reveals kerplunk, kibitz, kibosh, kick in, kickback, to kid, out of kilter. Many archaisms and obsolete words (so marked in the text) are included such as a general reader might encounter in older English literature -- words like prithee, goodman, rood, alarum, forfend. But the author, guided always by the principle that a dictionary of this sort should be practical and useful above everything else, has shown excellent discrimination in omitting other archaic or obsolete words that only the specialist would ever need. The space that these words might have occupied is given

instead to an amazing number of modern words, some of them almost as modern as today's newspaper -- such as ground alert, rocket launcher, air lift, positron, spaceman. Moreover, Dr. Bulas is already preparing an appendix to include words and expressions that have appeared since the first volume was printed.

A Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Cracow when the Nazis invaded Poland and attempted to suppress the intellectual life of that country, Dr. Bulas was arrested and confined in a Nazi concentration camp for half a year. On his release, he had to live as best he could by teaching English to private pupils. At this time he saw the need of a comprehensive and modern English-Polish, Polish-English dictionary. Then and there he set to work creating the kind of dictionary needed, and he has been working on the project ever since -- a matter of twenty years. Much of the dictionary was finished when Dr. Bulas reached America in 1951. At that time he secured a collaborator in Professor Whitfield, whose chief responsibility has been to check on the idiomatic quality of the English in the dictionary. The long labor has been finished at the Fondren Library, where Dr. Bulas accepted a position in 1952. It is worth adding that his relationship with Rice has been further strengthened by the fact that his only daughter is now a Rice student in the junior class.

Dr. Bulas, who knows eight languages, has said: "There is no doubt in my mind that English is the richest of all the languages in the Western world." His great dictionary does magnificent justice to the language.

George Williams

THE FONDREN LIBRARY NEEDS

CAMPANILE

1956

RECENT ACQUISITIONS IN  
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERIAL PUBLICATIONS

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Advances in the astronautical sciences.

American Mathematical Society. Proceedings of symposia in pure mathematics.

Annual review in automatic programming.

Archive for history of exact sciences.

British power engineering.

Chemical titles; current author and keyword indexes from selected chemical journals.

China. Geological Survey. Geological bulletin.

Coke and chemistry U. S. S. R.

Comparative biochemistry and physiology.

Contemporary physics.

Elemente der Mathematik. Beihefte.

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Index chemicus.

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Issledovaniâ po zharoprochnym splavam.

Journal of existential psychiarty.

Journal of primatology: Primates.

Materials research and standards.

Mathematische Forschungsberichte.

Nihon Kôkû gakkai. Transactions.

Nuclear engineering abstracts.

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Robert A. Welch Foundation, Houston, Texas.  
Research bulletin.

Royal Astronomical Society, London.  
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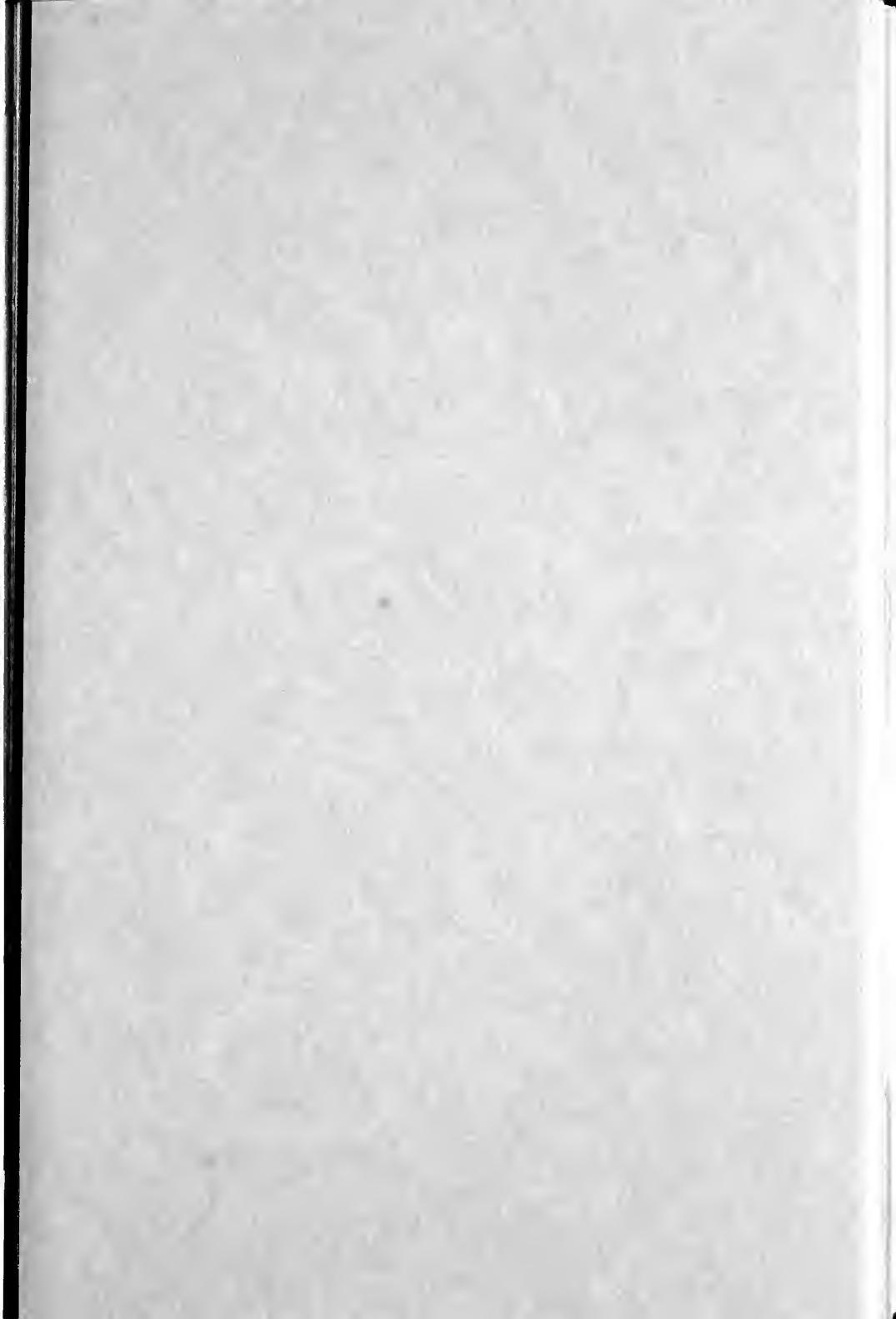
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